

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants submit this Amendment, together with a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c) (“SIDS”) and a Petition for Extension of Time, in reply to the Office Action mailed March 6, 2003.

In this Amendment, Applicants amend claim 27 to better define the claimed invention and to improve clarity. Applicants also amend claims 31, 35-51, and 53-55 to improve clarity. Additionally, Applicants add new claims 56-90. Further, Applicants amend the Abstract of the Disclosure.

Before entry of this Amendment, claims 1 and 27-55 were pending in this application. After entry of this Amendment, claims 27-90 are pending in this application.

The originally-filed specification, claims, abstract, and drawings fully support the amendments to the Abstract of the Disclosure; the amendments to claims 27, 31, 35-51, and 53-55; and the addition of new claims 56-90. No new matter was introduced.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 27-55 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 1; rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2; and rejected claims 1 and 27-55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,826,297 to Alderfer (“Alderfer”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,248,287 to Christman (“Christman”).

Drawings

Applicants filed corrected drawing sheets on August 7, 2001. However, the Office Action does not indicate whether the corrected drawing sheets are accepted or objected to by the Examiner. Applicants request that the Examiner indicate the status of the corrected drawing sheets in the next paper mailed from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”).

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Right of Priority and Benefit

In the Transmittal Letter filed April 24, 2001, Applicants claimed the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120 based on parent U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/219,422, filed December 23, 1998, in the USPTO. Applicants also claimed the right of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a) - (d) based on patent application No. 97830731.2, filed December 30, 1997, in the European Patent Office. Further, Applicants also claimed the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) based on prior-filed, copending provisional application No. 60/098,376, filed August 28, 1998, in the USPTO.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner expressly acknowledge Applicants' claims to the right of priority and benefit in the next paper mailed from the USPTO.

Section 112, ¶ 1 Rejections

Applicants amend claim 27 to recite, inter alia, "wherein the side portions of each first strip length cover in part or are partly covered by a side portion of at least one circumferentially-consecutive first strip length."

Applicants submit that this amendment obviates the Examiner's rejection of claims 27-55 under Section 112, ¶ 1.

Section 112, ¶ 2 Rejections

Applicants cancel, without prejudice or disclaimer, claim 1.

Applicants submit that this cancellation obviates the Examiner's rejection of claim 1 under Section 112, ¶ 2.

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Section 103(a) Rejections—Independent Claim 27

Applicants submit that independent claim 27, as amended, is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the cited references, including Alderfer, Christman, and the other art of record.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) using multiple references, each of three requirements must be met. First, the references, when combined, must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. M.P.E.P. 2143.03 (8th ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2003). Second, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the references in a manner resulting in the claimed invention. M.P.E.P. 2143.01 (8th ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2003). Third, there must be a reasonable expectation of success that the proposed combination would work for the intended purpose. M.P.E.P. 2143.02 (8th ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2003). Moreover, the second and third requirements “must both be found in the prior art, not in applicant’s disclosure.” M.P.E.P. 2143 (8th ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2003).

However, no proper combination of the cited art teaches or suggests all the limitations of independent claim 27, including at least “wherein forming the at least one circumferentially-inextensible annular structure comprises depositing at least one first elongated element in substantially-concentric coils to form a first circumferentially-inextensible annular insert, substantially in a form of an annulus, directly against respective side portions of the first strip lengths” and “wherein the respective side portions of the first strip lengths are not turned up around the first circumferentially-inextensible annular insert.”

For at least this reason, independent claim 27 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the cited references, including Alderfer, Christman, and the other art of record.

Section 103(a) Rejections—Dependent Claims 28-55

Applicants submit that dependent claims 28-55 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the cited references, including Alderfer, Christman, and the other art of record. This is true at least due to the direct or indirect dependency of claims 28-55 from independent claim 27.

SIDS

The SIDS includes, inter alia, a copy of an English-language translation of French Patent Document No. 0,384,231.

Claim Scope

In discussing the specification, claims, abstract, and drawings of the present application in this Amendment, it is to be understood that Applicants are in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification or abstract and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicants believe that Applicants are entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.

Summary

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this Application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

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Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 2, 2003

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of making a tire includes forming at least one first carcass ply of a carcass structure, forming at least one circumferentially-inextensible annular structure, and applying the at least one circumferentially-inextensible annular structure to a region close to inner circumferential edges of the at least one first carcass ply. Forming the at least one first carcass ply includes preparing first strip lengths, each first strip length including longitudinal and parallel thread elements at least partly coated with at least one layer of raw elastomer material, and depositing the first strip lengths onto a toroidal support to define two side portions and a crown portion. The crown portions are disposed consecutively in side-by-side relationship along a circumferential extension of the toroidal support. The side portions of each first strip length cover in part or are partly covered by a side portion of at least one circumferentially-consecutive first strip length.

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